

Birdsell Manufacturing Company collection S0120

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Rare Books and Manuscripts
140 North Senate Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46204
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Summary Information

Repository	Rare Books and Manuscripts
Title	Birdsell Manufacturing Company collection
Date	circa 1888-1965
Extent	0.04 Cubic feet 1 folder
Language	English
Mixed materials [Folder]	S120

Preferred Citation

Birdsell Manufacturing Company collection, Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library

Administrative History

Birdsell Manufacturing started out in New York in the year 1855. That year John Comly Birdsell invented a machine that combined the threshing of clover with the extraction of seeds that could be used in the next year's harvest. In 1856, Birdsell exhibited the thresher/huller at the New York State Fair and took first prize. In the fall of 1863, Birdsell moved his factory to South Bend, Indiana. While in South Bend, they expanded their product line to include the manufacture of wagons and carriages. The late nineteenth century proved to be good for Birdsell; with rising sales, they were able to expand their factory to 500,000 square feet.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the internal combustion engine and changing farm practices would mean hard times for the company. After years of decline and the stock market crash in 1929, the company continued to struggle on until September 15, 1938 when a massive fire broke out in the factory destroying the entire building. The company was reorganized as the Birdsell Corporation focusing on promoting a new washing machine with a water flex system. The design flopped and in 1965, the Board of Directors voted to liquidate the corporation and sell off the remaining equipment.

Source: Birdsell, R. (1994). Birdsell: The Invention, The Family, The Company. Retrieved February 20, 2013, from Center for History: Birdsell Clover Huller Company: <http://centerforhistory.org>.

Scope and Contents

The collection contains a color illustrated greeting card and small leather change purse from Birdsell Manufacturing ranging from circa 1888-1965.

Arrangement

This collection is arranged by subject.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Rare Books and Manuscripts

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

Legal title, copyright, and literary rights reside with Rare Books and Manuscripts, Indiana State Library, Indianapolis, IN. All requests to publish or quote from manuscripts must be submitted to Rare Books and Manuscripts.

Custodial History

This collection was received by Rare Books and Manuscripts as a donation from Van Norman Book Company in July 1978 and from Janet B. Parks during September 2015.

Accruals

No further additions are expected.

Processing Information

Collection processing completed during February 2013 by Sarah Pfundstein. EAD finding aid created 2015/09/21 by Bethany Fiechter.

Controlled Access Headings

Corporate Name(s)

- Birdsell Manufacturing Company (South Bend, Ind.).

Genre(s)

- Advertising cards

Geographic Name(s)

- South Bend (Ind.)

Subject(s)

- Agricultural machinery industry
- Farm equipment